

# Celebrating Sunnyside

**Cinco de Mayo Festival, Sunshine Days Car Show and Sunnyside's Lighted Farm Implement Parade all promise family fun**  
By Sandy John

Sunnyside has plenty to offer visitors, including parks, a golf course, wineries, and abundant sunshine. Its central location in the I-82 corridor – 35 miles from Yakima and 45 miles from the Tri-Cities – means the community is within easy driving distance of almost 400,000 people.

Several times a year, Sunnyside hosts events that draw thousands of visitors to the city of about 15,000 residents. Three annual events sponsored by the Sunnyside Chamber of Commerce celebrate the city's diverse heritage. Each of these events has been going on for more than two decades, serving as local traditions and bringing the community into the national spotlight of A&E television.

Sunnyside's Cinco de Mayo festival is held every year during the first weekend in May. (In 2010, that means starting on Friday, April 30.) The three-day event draws more than 20,000 celebrants to the 6th Street area in downtown Sunnyside, noted Pam Turner, executive director of the Sunnyside Chamber of Commerce.

The outdoor festival features free admission, over 150 vendor booths and live entertainment throughout the weekend, with Tejano bands coming from around the country to perform at Washington's largest Cinco de Mayo event.

Sunday, the last day of the Cinco de Mayo festival, features a charro competition (a contest of cowboy skills, including working with horses) and a parade through Sunnyside. The city has celebrated Cinco De Mayo since 1988.

An even older tradition is Sunshine Days, which started back in the early 1920s. The festival has changed and evolved over the decades, Turner noted, and this year much of the focus will be on cars – from antiques to low-riders. Along with the car show, Sunshine Days features a carnival, a parade and a quilt show. The Miss Sunnyside pageant also takes place during this busy weekend – the third weekend in September.

There will be small charge to enter a car in the show, Turner said, but those who enter get a goodie bag of gifts and coupons, as well as a chance for door prizes and trophies. There is no admission charge for spectators who attend the show at Central Park.

Sunnyside's biggest claim to fame, however, might be the annual Lighted Farm Implement Parade, held the first Saturday of December. The parade – marking its 22nd year in 2010 – celebrates Sunnyside's rural heritage and features everything from semi-trailers decorated with lights to grape harvesters, combines and horse-drawn vehicles decked out for the holidays.

"It is the longest running lighted farm implement parade in the country," Turner said, and it has even inspired other communities to hold similar parades. A&E, the cable network, has listed the parade as one of the Top Ten lighted Christmas parades in the U.S. Parade day activities include the annual one-mile Jingle Bell run before the parade.



25,000 spectators

from the tri-state region are expected to line the streets during the evening parade.

For more information on any of these events, contact the Sunnyside Chamber. Encouraging tourism is just one activity of the chamber, which includes individuals, small businesses, farmers and corporations working to improve the community, Turner said.



## FOR MORE INFO

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